

**Educational Surrogate Parent Program for Family-Centered
Early Supports and Services (FCESS)
NH Department of Education • 101 Pleasant Street • Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3842**

How to Request the Appointment of an Educational Surrogate Parent

Children need an adult to represent their interests through the child's early intervention process. This process may start with 1) a referral and evaluation, and may continue to include 2) the decision as to whether the child is eligible for FCESS, 3) the development of an IFSP, and 4) monitoring of the child's progress. Children whose parents are unknown, unable to be located, deceased, whose parental rights have been terminated, or whose parents have relinquished their rights are in need of an Educational Surrogate Parent.

The Area Agency must request an Educational Surrogate Parent for a child in Family-Centered Early Supports and Services.

Area Agency Responsibilities

1. Alerts itself to a child in FCESS with a possible need for an Educational Surrogate Parent:
 - a) On the date of referral of any child to FCESS.
 - b) On the date any new child in early supports and services moves into the area and begins FCESS.
 - c) When any early supports and services child is taken into DCYF custody or guardianship.
2. Conducts an investigation of the child's need for an Educational Surrogate Parent (parents are unknown, unable to be located, deceased or termination or relinquishment of parent rights has been completed).
3. If the Area Agency determines as a result of its investigation that a parent or guardian is available to serve as the child's educational representative, NO Educational Surrogate Parent appointment would be requested by the Area Agency.
4. In cases that DCYF has custody of the child, the Area Agency needs to either obtain documentation of termination/relinquishment of parental rights **or when the parent(s) are unavailable, the Area Agency sends "written notice" to BOTH biological parents** (mother & father) informing them of the Area Agency's decision to request the appointment of an Educational Surrogate Parent for their child. In cases where DCYF has legal guardianship of the child, the Area Agency needs to obtain documentation of this to submit with the request for an educational surrogate parent.
5. The Area Agency requests the appointment by sending the following Educational Surrogate Parent Program forms to the NH Department of Education:
 - a. **a completed application form.**
 - b. **a sworn, notarized affidavit attesting to the unavailability of each parent or legal guardian.**
 - c. **copies of the documented efforts to contact the parent or legal guardian with no response or written permission to move forward with the request for an educational surrogate parent OR provide court documentation that DCYF has legal guardianship of the child OR provide court documentation of termination/relinquishment of parental rights, if applicable.**

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6. Reviews the Educational Surrogate Parent Request materials for completeness and appropriateness, returning any forms for more information if necessary. **(ALL APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE A COMPLETED, NOTARIZED AFFIDAVIT and DOCUMENTATION REGARDING BIOLOGICAL PARENTS).**
7. Once the NH DOE verifies that application materials are complete and accurate, locates an available Educational Surrogate Parent to represent the student.
8. The NH DOE then formally appoints the Educational Surrogate Parent for the student and notifies the Educational Surrogate Parent and all other involved parties of the official assignment.